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November 18, 2002

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## **EX PARTE**

Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
236 Massachusetts Avenue, NE  
Suite 110  
Washington, DC 20002

**Re: Notice of Ex Parte Presentation: Citizens Telephone Company of North Dakota, Nemont Telephone Cooperative, Inc., Missouri Valley Communications, Inc., and Reservation Telephone Cooperative Waiver of the Definition of "Study Area" in Part 36 and Sections 61.41(c)(2), Section 69.3(3)(11) and 69.605(c) of the Commission's Rules CC Docket No. 96-45**

Dear Ms. Dortch,

On November 18, 2002, Kathy Greenwood of Missouri Valley Communications, Inc. ("MVCI"), Royce Aslakson of Reservation Telephone Cooperative ("RTC"), and their counsel Mary Sisak and I, Steve Metts of GVNW Consulting, and Kevin Saville and Robert Binder of Citizens Telephone Company of North Dakota met with Cara Voth, Gary Seigel, Sharon Webber and Doug Slotten of the FCC's Wireline Competition Bureau to discuss the Parties' request for expedited approval of the above-referenced waivers by January, 2003.

In support of the expedited waiver, MVCI and RTC presented information concerning the short construction period in North Dakota. To begin construction in June, 2003, RTC must start engineering and ordering materials in late March or early April to upgrade the relevant exchanges. With FCC approval in January, 2003, the Parties would be able to close on the acquisition to meet this timeframe. Approval at a later date would mean a 1 year delay before RTC would be able to begin construction.

In addition, RTC serves areas surrounding the acquisition exchanges and is currently upgrading those facilities. RTC discussed how approval of the study area waiver by January 2003 would allow RTC to upgrade its current and new facilities at the same time, thus creating

economies of scale and efficiencies in the construction process.

MVCI also presented information concerning the timing of construction projects and requested Commission approval by January 2003 in order to allow MVCI to begin planned upgrades during the 2003 construction schedule. A copy of the handout provided by MVCI is attached.

Consistent with section 1.1206 of the Commission's rules, 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206, we are filing one electronic copy of this notice in the above-captioned proceeding and request that you place it in the record of those proceedings.

Sincerely,

*Benjamin H. Dickens, Jr. /MB*

Benjamin H. Dickens, Jr.

11-13-02

To: Kathy Greenwood

From: Tom Stee, Engineering Manager

Subject: Time frames required for plant facility upgrade projects.

There are two types of projects involved with maintenance or upgrading telephone facilities. Minor, or short distance-buried plant and Major, long distance construction involving both aerial and/or buried plant. Each has different time requirements depending on many differing factors. Listed below are approximate time frames for each function on these projects.

Short distance, buried plant construction by in house construction, no bidding involved:

- Finalize and evaluate plant design – 3 weeks
- Prepare and submit for budget approval – 2 weeks
- Select route and complete staking – 1 week
- Right of Way acquisition – 3 weeks
- Order material and delivery - 4 weeks
- In house construction - 6 weeks

Total time period to complete = 19 weeks

Our window of opportunity for buried construction is typically from mid March to the 1<sup>st</sup> of November before the ground is frozen.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> type of project is long distance, could involve buried and aerial plant and would be the type of project that would involve letting bids to a contractor to construct. These projects are extensive and time consuming. An assumption on the following project would be part of the construction is aerial and involves the power company. Another assumption is 2.5 miles of buried construction and 7 miles of aerial construction.

Following is a list of the items required and approximate time frames to complete them:

- Finalize and evaluate design – 7 weeks
- Route selection and staking – 6 weeks
- Right of Way acquisition – 3 weeks

- Design and prepare sag/tension specifications – 6 weeks
- Submit to MDU for review and approval – 6 weeks
- Final plans and specifications preparation – 2 weeks
- Advertise for bids and requests for packets – 2 weeks
- Bid preparation and bid letting – 4 weeks
- Material ordering and delivery – 6 weeks
- Begin and complete construction – 8 weeks

Total approximate time elapsed for this specific project – 50 weeks

All of the above time frames may vary depending on the entities involved, total distance, time of year. If I may be of further assistance please ask.